

**TODD CHAPMAN, CHARGE D’AFFAIRES  
LAUNCHING OF NEW MOZAMBIQUE NATIONAL BRAND  
JOACHIM CHISSANO CONFERENCE CENTRE, MAPUTO  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2009**

Your Excellency Mr. Armando Emílio Guebuza, President of the Republic of Mozambique;

Your Excellency, President of the Assembly of the Republic of Mozambique;

My Lord Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Republic of Mozambique;

Your Excellency, Minister of Tourism, Youth & Sports;

Your Excellencies Members of the Council of Ministers of Mozambique

Your Excellencies Ministers of Tourism

Your Excellency Executive Secretary of SADC;

Your Excellencies Provincial Governors

Your Excellency Ambassador Willouby of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development

Your Excellency Geoffrey Lipman, Assistant Secretary General, World Tourism Organization

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

On behalf of the United States Government and the US Mission in Mozambique, I’d like to express our very special thanks and appreciation to you, Mr. President for the opportunity to participate in this event celebrating Mozambique Tourism.

Five years ago, at the request of the Government of Mozambique, the US Government, through USAID, fielded a team of Mozambican and international consultants to assess various sectors of the economy that could best contribute to increasing Mozambique's international market access and catalyze improvements in the business environment. We asked these consultants to identify sectors that would increase employment and attracting large private sector investments while also promoting rural development and preserve the environment.

The team found that the richness of Mozambique's cultural and natural attractions, especially in the northern provinces of Cabo Delgado, Nampula and Niassa, made tourism an economically dynamic sector which Mozambique could potentially develop a comparative advantage.

Their work helped convince us that tourism remains one of Mozambique's best options for economic growth, and labor intensive job creation. The decision of the Council of Ministers in 2003, to develop tourism into a major industry to position Mozambique among world-class tourism destinations, clearly still holds true. If done right, tourism could earn Mozambique billions of dollars per year in foreign exchange revenues, as it does for some of its neighbors. Donor support and government policy provide an important foundation to achieve this goal, but real success will ultimately be measured by the ability to motivate substantial private investment in the tourism sector. Attracting that investment, and the tourists who follow, can be encouraged with targeted incentives for tourism investment, as I understand are currently

being considered, ; through a more aggressive opening of Mozambican skies to increase airline competition and to reduce fares on key air routes; and through the elimination of visa requirements for tourists from countries who most frequently travel to this region, as neighboring countries with large tourism sectors have already done.

Since January, 2006, we have been working and supporting the Ministry of Tourism to improve the competitiveness of the sector. We are delighted that US assistance in the areas of natural resource conservation, historic preservation, sector policy and regulatory enhancement are yielding important results. With the approval by the Council of Ministers last year, Mozambique is now using integrated land use planning for resort development, an innovative tool for attracting quality investors and ensuring environmental quality while also addressing complex land issues in Mozambique. The U.S. government now stands ready to support the establishment of Mozambican public/private partnerships and institutions that will increase the confidence of private investors in the sector.

Your Excellency Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, we believe that our assistance and the assistance of other partner donors are providing an impetus for future impact on the development of the sector. Tonight, we are your proud partners in launching this Branding, Marketing and Tourism Promotion initiative.

This event marks a major leap forward and commits us all to this national effort to utilize and promote the opportunities and strengths of this great country for the benefit of its people. Be assured, Mr. President, the people of the United States stand ready to work and walk side by side with the people of Mozambique on the path of progress and prosperity it is our shared hope, I am sure, that an expanding tourism sector will help us all reach that destination.

Thank You.